



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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Martin O'Malley
Governor

Shari T. Wilson
Secretary

Anthony G. Brown
Lieutenant Governor

Robert M. Summers, Ph.D.
Deputy Secretary

March 11, 2010

The Honorable Joan Carter Conway, Chairman
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 West Wing
11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401 - 1991

Re: Senate Bill 693 – Green Maryland Act of 2010

Dear Chairman Conway:

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE or “the Department”) would like to express support for the overall objectives of recycling and waste reduction and the goals of Senate Bill 693 *Green Maryland Act of 2010*. The requirements in the bill are all measures that support the Maryland Climate Action Plan’s recommendations and goals and Governor O’Malley’s EmPOWER Maryland energy reduction initiative to reduce State government’s power consumption 15 percent by 2015.

The bill would require the Department of General Services (DGS) to purchase 90 percent of its paper as recycled paper. In addition, the bill would require each unit of State government to review its procurement specifications annually, and to the extent practicable, require the use of a percentage price preference in their purchase of supplies and commodities containing recycled materials. DGS has reported to MDE that in FY 2009, buying paper products made with recycled content paper was the rule for DGS, not the exception, with 97 percent of paper products (*e.g.*, bond paper, computer paper, etc.) purchased made from recycled content paper.

The Department is supportive of many concepts that would result in reduced disposal and increased recycling, particularly for State government. Waste diversion and recycling save energy, reduce greenhouse gasses and other pollutants generated in the manufacturing process and at landfills, save natural resources, and reduce the amount of waste disposed. Even in times of lowered market returns on recyclables, there are avoided disposal costs associated with recycling. Senate Bill 693 could help MDE in its efforts to encourage State agencies to reduce their wastes and recycle more.

Thank you for your consideration. We will continue to monitor Senate Bill 693 during the Committee’s deliberations, and I am available to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to contact me at 410-260-6301 or by e-mail at lnissley@mde.state.md.us if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Lisa Nissley
Legislative Liaison/Environmental Justice Coordinator

cc: The Honorable Jamie Raskin
Shari T. Wilson, Secretary
Heather Barthel, Director of Legislation and Policy
Horacio Tablada, Director of Land Management Administration